

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 14384

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.), PFOR, UK

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH HAROLD WILSON

REF: STATE 239782

1. WILSON ACCEPTS WITH PLEASURE SECRETARY'S INVITATION TO BREAKFAST AT CLARIDGES ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, AT 0800. TOM MCNALLY, INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE LABOR PARTY, HAS INDICATED THAT WILSON WILL BE INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER THE MIDDLE EAST SITUATION, US-EUROPEAN RELATIONS, AND THE FUTURE OF US MILITARY ROLE IN EUROPE.

2. MIDDLE EAST. WILSON IS A CLOSE FRIEND OF GOLDA MEIR AND A LONG-STANDING SUPPORTER OF ISRAEL. HE HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE EC FOR ALLEGEDLY SUBMITTING TO ARAB BLACKMAIL. HE BELIEVES THE EC HAS ADOPTED AT THE EXPENSE OF ISRAEL A MIDDLE EAST POLICY THAT IS IN EFFECT A TALISMAN OF SPURIOUS EUROPEAN UNITY. WILSON WILL BE INTERESTED TO HEAR AN EXPOSITION OF US POLICY AND OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE PROSPECTS FOR THE FORTHCOMING PEACE TALKS.

3. US-EUROPEAN RELATIONS. WILSON PROFESSES TO BELIEVE THAT HMG HAS CONCENTRATED ITS ATTENTION ON ITS NEW PLACE IN EC TO THE NEGLECT OF ITS TRANS-ATLANTIC RELATIONS. HE WILL BE INTERESTED IN SECRETARY'S
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ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT STATE OF US-EUROPEAN RELATIONS.

SECRETARY IN TURN MAY WISH TO INQUIRE PRECISELY WHAT A WILSON GOVERNMENT WOULD DO ABOUT BRITISH MEMBERSHIP OF THE EC. THE LABOR PARTY'S OFFICIAL POLICY IS TO RENEGOTIATE THE TERMS OF BRITAIN'S MEMBERSHIP AND THEN SUBMIT THE QUESTION TO THE ELECTORATE, BUT THE CONDITIONS IT LAYS DOWN FOR RENEGOTIATION AMOUNT TO VIRTUAL SCRAPPING OF TREATY OF ROME. THE PARTY ITSELF IS STILL DEEPLY DIVIDED ON THIS ISSUE, AND DESPITE WILSON'S INCREASINGLY HOSTILE PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT EC, NO ONE KNOWS HOW HE WOULD INTERPRET AND SEEK TO CARRY OUT HIS PARTY'S POLICY IF AND WHEN HE RETURNS AS PRIME MINISTER.

4. US MILITARY ROLE IN EUROPE. WILSON WILL BE INTERESTED TO KNOW HOW US SEES ITS MILITARY ROLE IN EUROPE EVOLVING OVER THE COMING DECADE. UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ITS LEFT WING, THE LABOR PARTY HAS GONE ON RECORD AT ITS LAST TWO ANNUAL CONFERENCES AS FAVORING MASSIVE CUTS IN UK DEFENSE BUDGET AND CALLING FOR REMOVAL OF ALL NUCLEAR BASES FROM UK. WILSON HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE DOES NOT REGARD THESE RESOLUTIONS AS BINDING ON ANY FUTURE LABOR GOVERNMENT. AT THE SAME TIME, HE WILL BE LOOKING FOR REASSURANCE THAT US INTENDS TO MAINTAIN ITS OWN MILITARY ROLE IN EUROPE AND STILL ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO BRITISH ROLE.

5. AS BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR MEETING, WE ARE SENDING BY SEPTTEL OUR ASSESSMENT OF WILSON'S CURRENT SITUATION AS LEADER OF THE LABOR PARTY.

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